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Re-Envisioning Transforming Communities Initiative

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Re-Envisioning Transforming Communities Initiative

Qualitative Research Portion

1

HAVE YOU SEEN A LARGE PROBLEM AND WISHED WE COULD SOLVE IT ALREADY?

2

LARGE PICTURE (MACRO) SOCIAL WORK

- Political Action
- Advocacy
- Research
- Education
- Community Work

3

DWINDLING ENGAGEMENT

In the past couple decades, the resources and engagement in macro practice social work have been slowly disappearing.



Introduction

Transforming Communities Initiative

- Train students to become data-driven and civically engaged social workers.
- Conduct research to assist communities in making important social change.
- Founded in 2014 and is ready for a re-envisioning and strategic planning in order to evolve and better serve.



Research Objectives



- **Discover what social challenges face Utah communities in which TCI may be able to address through research, teaching, policy advocacy, and action.**
- **Determine what type of assistance human-services-oriented organizations in Utah need to accomplish their mission and create change within their communities.**
- **Ascertain what ways can TCI increase interest and capacity as well as enhance the student learning experience related to macro social work practice.**



Project Methods

Goal: Gain a robust understanding of the perspectives and issues experienced from community members and students.

- Qualitative study using semi-structured group interviews.
- Recruitment: Students, Alumni, and Community Decision Makers.
- Interviews for community/group with 4+ interested participants.
- Participants selected their top issues for discussion based on previous survey results.
- Optional follow-up survey provided.
- Coding and analysis with categorical theming.



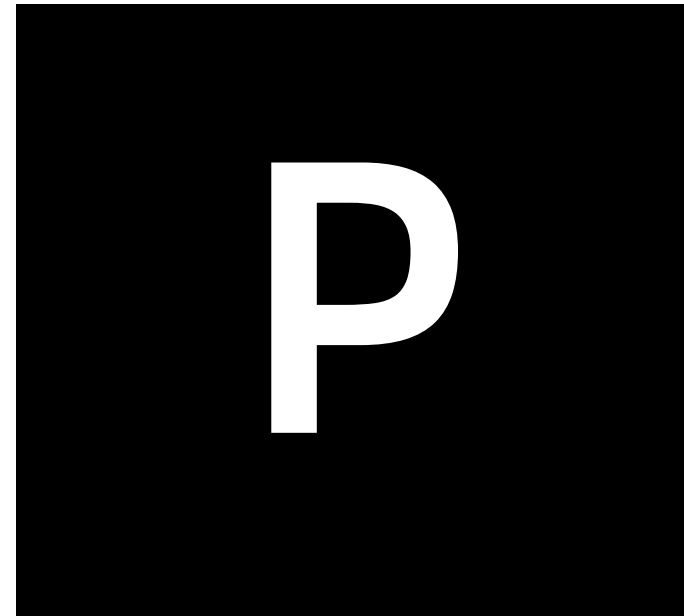


Current Findings

Top Community Issues

	CHILDREN & YOUTH ARE FREE FROM ABUSE	HOUSING	JOB	MENTAL HEALTH	PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS FEELING WELCOME	SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS AND TREATMENT
Blanding	✓	✓				✓
Logan		✓		✓	✓	
Moab		✓	✓			
Price	✓		✓			
Tooele		✓				✓
Uintah Basin						✓

Logan Overview

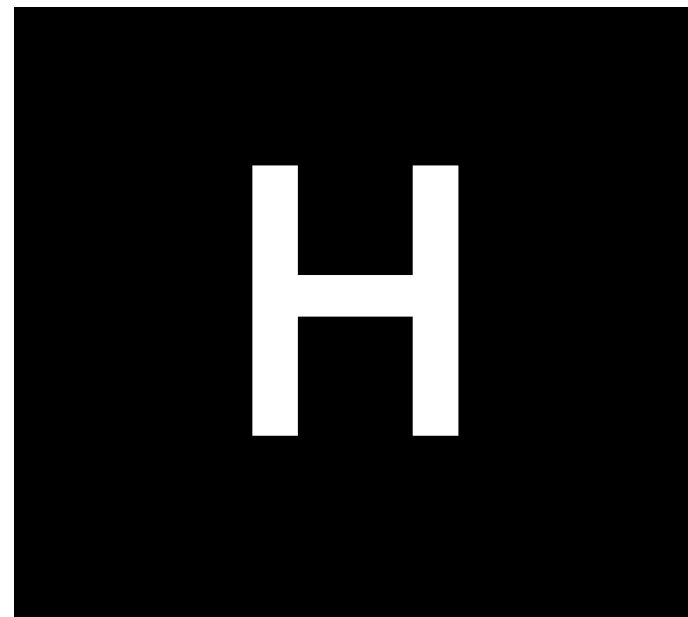


People of Different Backgrounds Feeling Welcome

- Fear of people from different backgrounds, races and religions.
- Dismissive political climate increasing ignorance and negative beliefs.
- Desire for more outreach and engagement.

Housing

- Low stock of affordable, quality housing available
- High rental rates often prevent savings for homeownership.
- Substandard housing disproportionately impacts immigrants and refugees.



Mental Health

- Mental health problems are rising.
- Access and quality of mental health services and resources is limited.
- Desired need for the continuation of barrier and mental health stigma removal.

Preliminary Results for Student Engagement Macro Social Work

■ Macro Practice Stigma

- Macro practice is difficult.
- Few jobs available.

■ Interest in Macro Practice

- Hands on Assignments
- Class and Outside Experiences

■ Improvements for Macro Education

- Raise awareness of social work options.
- Increase macro practice practicum choices.
- Improve curriculum with more macro focus.
- Opportunities to engage with macro practice.
- Add more community engagement.





Conclusions

- Each community has issues where USU can find ways to assist.
- Students gaining interest in macro work typically find it through experiences offered.
- TCI will utilize gathered data for strategic planning that will assess ways to engage students by offering experiences that assist communities.

Thank you!

**For more information
regarding this study
please email my mentor
Jayme Walters, the
Director of TCI, or myself.**

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